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ABSTRACT

The marketing technique of benefit segmentation may be effective in increasing enrollment in adult educational programs, according to a study at College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, Illinois. The study was conducted to test applicability of benefit segmentation to enrollment generation. The measuring instrument used in this study--the course improvement survey--measured interests, demographic characteristics, and needs of a random sample of 487 representatives of the student body. Validity of the instrument was improved by incorporating suggestions of a validation jury and of those involved in pilot tests at nearby colleges. Types of learners were categorized according to their reasons for participation in adult education and identified by their demographic characteristics and interests. Orientations categorized, partially based on the literature, included social/improvement, learning/career, leisure/status, and submissive. Participants were then grouped into benefit segments through Ward's hierarchical cluster analysis. Participants were grouped according to orientations and correlated with types of courses selected, work schedules, age, and work and home locations. The findings suggest separate program and promotional strategies for each benefit segment, but further research is needed to test the effectiveness and applicability of benefit segmentation to other audiences and purposes. (KC)

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INCREASING ENROLLMENT BY BETTER SERVING YOUR INSTITUTION'S TARGET AUDIENCES THROUGH BENEFIT SEGMENTATION

Presented to:

National Adult Education Conference

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by

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Statement of the problem. As the number of youth decreases, educational institutions seek to attract adult learners to their programs without violating principles of adult education paraphrased below:

1. Programs should be designed in response to needs and interests of potential participants (Knowles, 1970, pp. 79-98).

2. Only those objectives which are congruent with needs and interests of individuals, with goals and resources of an institution, and with its role in improving society are appropriate objectives for program planning (Knowles, 1957, p. 237).

McKinley's review of needs assessment models disclosed that none appeared to consider all three sources of programing objectives. He recommended "target populations and patterns of individual interests" be identified with techniques from market research (1973, p. 72).

Congruency of marketing and adult education. Kotler defined marketing as "a human activity directed at satisfying needs and wants through exchange processes (1976, p. 5) and the ideal organization as seeking "to sense, serve, and satisfy its markets and publics, and through this make its contribution to the well-being of society" (1975, p. 48). Hence, philosophies of Kotler and Knowles appeared congruent. Both fields also tended to include program, scheduling, location, institutional services, and promotion in the total program offering (McCarthy, 1978, pp. 39-43, Howard, 1977, p. 9).

Benefit segmentation appeared to be a market research technique congruent with these principles. As applied to adult education, the technique identifies types of adult learners by categorizing them according to their reasons for participation and identifies their demographic characteristics and interests -- information that suggests program and promotional strategies for generating enrollments. Strategies of those types most congruent with objectives of an institution and society might be selected for implementation.

Data collection and hypotheses. The purpose of this study was to test applicability of benefit segmentation to enrollment generation. This technique

was applied at College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, a prosperous western suburb of Chicago. This public community college attracts employed adults as part-time students

The measuring instrument used in this study, the course improvement survey, measured interests, demographic characteristics, and needs of a random sample of 487 representatives of the student body. Needs were assessed by Boshier's Education Participation Scale (Note 1). These students participated in 92 randomly selected courses from those offered Spring Quarter, 1979. Validity of the instrument was improved by incorporating suggestions of a validation jury (Note 2) and those involved in pilot tests at nearby colleges. Reliability of items ranged between .6 and 1.0, being the consistency of responses of 93 participants in 10 randomly selected courses.

Hypotheses tested in this study were as follows:

HO_1 Each benefit segment cannot be differentiated by its motivational orientations

HO_2 Each benefit segment cannot be significantly ($\alpha \leq .10$) differentiated by a program offering preference.

HO_3 Each benefit segment cannot be significantly ($\alpha \leq .10$) differentiated by a demographic characteristic.

HO_4 Membership in each benefit segment cannot be predicted with at least 70 percent accuracy by demographic characteristics.

All four of these null hypotheses were rejected.

Methodology and results. Formation of benefit segments assessed hypothesis one. The first step was identifying orientations through principal-component factor analysis of reasons for participation. Oblique rotation not forcing orientations to be uncorrelated, reasons may be highly ($\geq .40$) correlated with more than one orientation. In this study, the six orientations reported by Darkenwald (1977, p. 1) as common to many factor analytic studies were named Social, Learning, Altruism, Improvement, Compliance, and Advancement to reflect similarity among correlated reasons. Academic, Leisure, and Change orientations were also identified, as shown in Exhibit 1.

The second step was grouping participants into benefit segments through Ward's hierarchical cluster analysis (Note 3) of orientation profiles. Participants most similar in their profiles were sequentially fused by minimizing incremental error variance. The five cluster solution was selected, fewer clusters resulting in much more heterogeneous benefit segments and more clusters increasing the complexity of the

solution. Representing from 12 to 41 percent of the students, benefit segments were named Ambivalent, Social/Improvement, Learning/Career, Leisure/Status, and Submissive to reflect orientations influencing members more than 75 percent of the respondents, as shown in Exhibit 2 and 3.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit test assessed hypothesis two. As shown in Exhibit 2, Ambivalent learners seemed interested in credit and counseling; Social/Improvement learners, to study hard and seek social activities; Learning/Career types, to enjoy short business courses; Leisure/Status learners to participate in non-credit evening programs in art and physical education; and Submissive learners to enroll in medical and speech courses.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test also assessed hypothesis three. As shown in Exhibit 2, Submissive learners tended to live in the county seat and work part-time in non-business jobs, Ambivalent learners to work full time, and Leisure/Status learners to be over 20 years of age.

Discriminant analysis assessed hypothesis four. To summarize, Ambivalent learners tended to commute far to work; Social/Improvement learners, to be 18 to 21 years old; Learning/Career types, to commute from the west side of the county; Leisure/Status learners,

to be women over 20; and Submissive learners to work nearby in medicine. As shown in Exhibit 2, all types except Ambivalent learners were predicted with at least 70 percent accuracy.

Implications. These findings suggested separate program and promotional strategies for each benefit segment. Medical programs in congruence with expectations of local medical employers might be promoted by specialized mailings; non-credit, evening, leisure, programs, offered to adult women as a prestigious "night out"; business subjects taught by individualized instruction or on the radio or train during "rush hours," advertised to commuters; and discussions of personal and societal problems and social activities, communicated to young adults. Ambivalent learners might be motivated by addressing their complaints and counseling to bring meaning to their self-identified educational goals.

Although these marketing strategies are not generalizable elsewhere, being designed to generate enrollment at College of DuPage, the technique of benefit segmentation might be effective in increasing enrollment in other educational settings. Further research is needed to test the effectiveness and applicability of benefit segmentation to other audiences and purposes.

List of Notes

[1]Education Participation Scale is available from: Dr. Roger W. Boshier, Adult Education Research Centre, University of British Columbia, 5760 Toronto Road, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6T 1L2.

[2]The validation jury consisted of Roger W. Boshier, University of British Columbia; Robert D. Boyd, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Harlan G. Copeland, University of Minnesota; Burton W. Kreitlow, University of Wisconsin-Madison; and Joan Wright, North Carolina State University.

[3]Wishart, D. Clustan 6000 user manual, Revision for CPC-6000/cyber series, 1977. Obtainable from Vogelback Computing Center, Northwestern University, 2129 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60201.

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EXHIBIT 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE NINE MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS

Motivational Orientation	Description
Social	Desire for social relationships, some variety and personal insight
Academic	Desire to meet formal academic requirements, some professional advancement
Learning	Desire for the inherent satisfaction of learning
Altruism	Desire to prepare to serve mankind, some personal insight and preparation for other courses
Improvement	Desire for improvement in an unpleasant social situation
Compliance	Desire to comply with the expectations of others
Advancement	Desire for career or social status
Leisure	Desire for relief from the routine
Change	Desire for a long-term change

EXHIBIT 2

CHARACTERISTICS OF TYPES OF ADULT LEARNERS IDENTIFIED BY GOODNOW

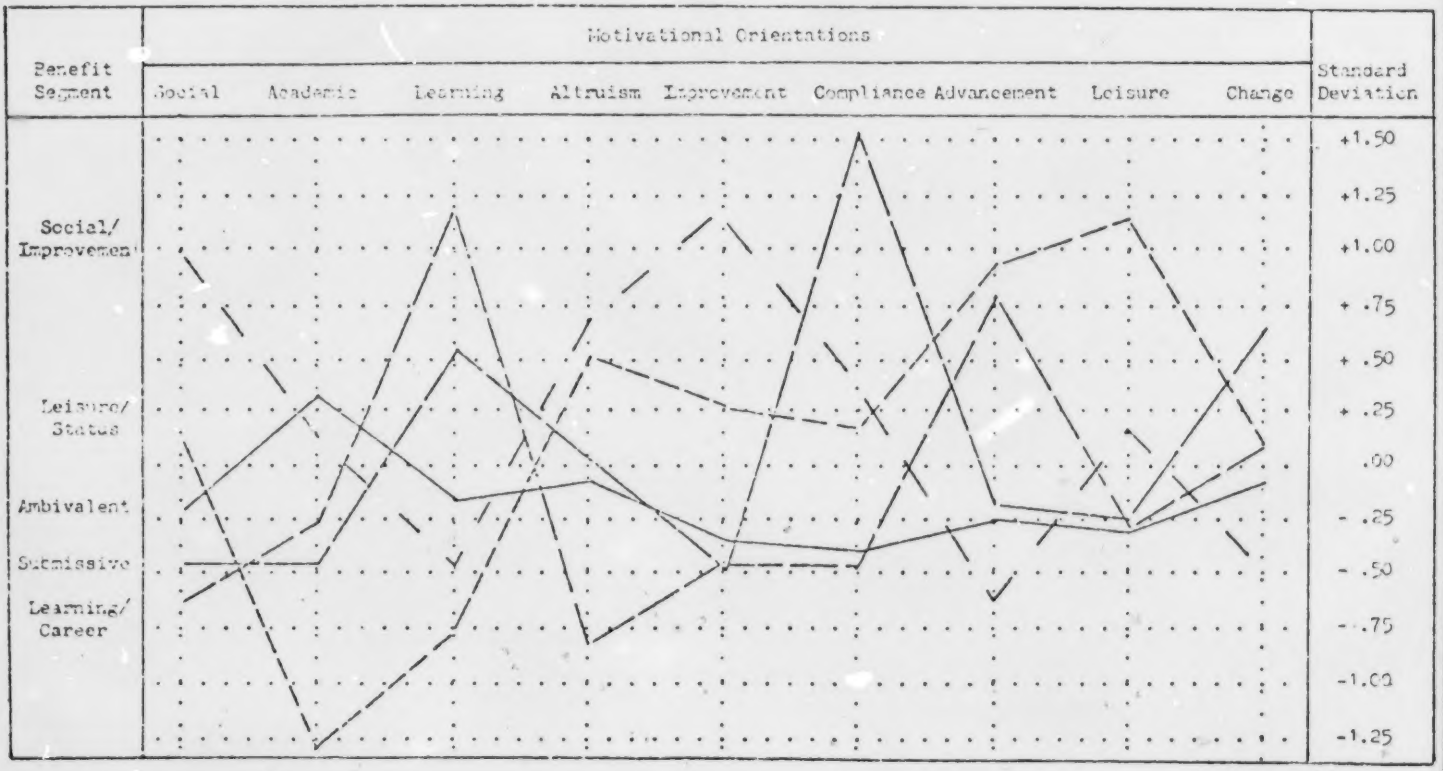
Type of Learner	Size	Orientation	Demographic Characteristic	Accuracy[1]	Program Offering Preference
Ambivalent	41%	None	Works ≥ 24 hours*, lawyer/ judge, metal work	65%	1-2 hour session, Mon. 10-11, Wed. 8-11, Fri. 8-11 a.m., ≥ hours homework, ≤ 24 classmat credit, ≥ 4 total credits, A.A.S. degree or transfer credit. many complaints, many subjects
Social/ Improvement	20%	Improvement Social & Altruism	18-21 years old, factory job, wood machining, wood/ tobacco processing	72%	4-5 sessions/week, ≥ 5 hours homework, many complaints, many subjects
Learning/ Career	14%	Learning & Advancement	Not 22-29 years old, long commute, lives west, metal machining, librarian	72%	Not 1½ hour sessions, busines few complaints
Leisure/ Status	13%	Leisure & Advancement	Lives south or far*, ≥ 21 years old, woman, short commute, undecided, business specialty, mechanics/ machine repair	75%	3, not 1 hour sessions, 1, not 5 sessions/week, Mon.-Thurs. 7-10 p.m., ≤ 2 hours homework, ≤ 10 classmates, non-credit, ≤ 4 total credits, not A.A.S. degree or transfer credit, few complaints, art & physical ed. undecided career goal
Submissive	12%	Compliance	Works ≤ 30 hours*, lives in Wheaton*, not 21 or 30-39 years old, short commute, medicine	71%	Not 9 week term, ≤ 35 classmates, medicine & speech, few complaints

[1]Accuracy is percent of accurately predicted members of a benefit segment through discriminating demographic characteristics.

*Indicates demographic characteristics identified through Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, rather than discriminant analysis.

Exhibit 3

Motivational Orientations of Benefit Segments



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